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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals

Statement by Northern Ireland Women's European Platform, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.6/2010/1.

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Statement

1. The Northern Ireland Women's European Platform calls for broader and deeper monitoring of State parties to deliver effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. We are deeply concerned about the lack of progress and visible commitment with regard to substantially increasing women's participation in policy and decision-making. We strongly argue that until women are equally represented and visible in decision-making positions, including at the highest levels, policies and strategies will continue to be discriminatory and perpetuate women's inequality.

2. The Platform for Action commits State parties to address this deficit, but unless States are required to initiate specific measures with clear targets that are time bound, progress will be limited, and it will be impossible to monitor.

3. Although State parties completed the questionnaire, non-governmental organizations need to be able to contribute more effectively to the scrutiny of the progress by, for example, being able to submit a formal shadow report.

4. The Northern Ireland Women's European Platform therefore recommends that, in the implementation of the Platform for Action:

- Clear targets be set and actions be time bound
- Monitoring be robust and transparent
- Monitoring outcomes be disseminated
- Non-governmental organizations have the opportunity to critique the submissions of State parties before the official event
- Positive action be taken to increase the proportion of women in decision-making roles.